

ought to take the lead and take primary responsibility in our local schools. The federal role in local education is limited to providing resources to educate disadvantaged students, and this limited role should be maintained.

By encouraging good teachers, applauding a high level of parental involvement, and providing a safe learning environment while upholding rigorous standards, local communities play the most important role in providing quality education. The future of our schools, our nation, and our society is all the better for it.

#### TRIBUTE TO DAVID DeFORE

#### HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to David DeFore, who has served as the President of the Encino Chamber of Commerce for the past two years.

President Kennedy once said, "Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other." While David has acted as a role model and source of inspiration for the members of our community, he has continued to learn and grow in his own life through the pursuit of education.

A testament to his strength of character and the respect he has earned from his colleagues is illustrated through the amount of speaking engagements to which David has been invited. He has spoken on issues such as self-responsibility, goal setting, and the importance of always being a student of your profession.

David has exemplified these principles through his daily activities and his efforts within the community. He has served as the President of the Valley Cultural Center, is on the Board of Directors of the Valley Community Clinic and has served two years on the North Hollywood Project Area Committee. In addition, David has recently been appointed by Mayor Riordan to serve on the Greek Theater Advisory Committee.

His warm personality and caring nature have enabled him to be a respected leader in the business community as well. He is among the top producing commercial sales professionals in the San Fernando Valley. David also continues to take classes at UCLA Extension in a variety of areas.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, please join me in honoring David DeFore. He is a role model for the citizens of our community.

#### "A WELCOME ENTRANT INTO AN IMPORTANT DEBATE"

#### HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, during our recess I was delighted to have a chance to address a forum sponsored by the Committee of Concerned Journalists at the Columbia School of Journalism in December. This committee, chaired by one of our most distinguished journalists, Bill Kovach, deals

with the critical subject of the responsibility of people in the journalism profession. I attended as one who both believes passionately in the importance of a free and vigorous press for our democracy, and is disappointed in the work product of that journalism much of the time. Because it is wholly inappropriate for government at any level and in any form to try to dictate to journalists, even for the best of reasons and under the best of motives, it is essential if we are to see the improvements that I think necessary in this area that we have this sort of self-scrutiny by distinguished journalists.

It is for this reason that I welcome and congratulate the journalists who have convened this committee and the work they are doing. Because I believe this deserves the full attention of everyone concerned about the state of our democracy, I ask that their organizing statement be printed here, along with the list of those who serve as the leadership of the committee. As of the end of October more than 400 journalists had signed on as members, and while that list is—happily—too long to be printed here, I would be glad to share it with any who are interested.

#### COMMITTEE OF CONCERNED JOURNALISTS—AN OVERVIEW

The Committee of Concerned Journalists is an unusual collaboration of reporters, editors, producers, publishers, owners and academics worried about the future of their profession.

The group believes this is a critical moment in American journalism. Revolutionary changes in technology, in economic equations, in our relationship with the public, threaten the core principles that define journalism's role in democratic society.

With splintering audiences and information overload, companies at once diversifying and merging, confronted by unimaginable complexity, we have begun to doubt ourselves and the meaning of our profession.

To secure journalism's future, the group believes that journalists from all media, geography, rank and generation must be clear about what sets journalism apart from other endeavors. There is a price for our press freedoms: We have a professional obligation to broker honestly the information that citizens must have to fulfill their duties in a self-governing society. It is well enough to entertain and amuse, but we must also provide democracy's grist and glue.

The group is proposing to seek a clear expression of those purposes and those core principles that unite journalists and define journalism. We have issued a statement of concern, articulating why a national effort at self-examination is necessary. That statement is circulating in newsrooms across the country, gaining signatories. The plan is to convene public meetings for all types of journalists and the public. The group will listen carefully for common ground and then prepare a written report on what we have learned. It will not be a report of recommendations or a code of conduct. Like the seminal Hutchins Commission Report "A Free and Responsible Press" 50 years ago, the report will attempt to clarify the common ground journalists share.

The series, which begins in November in Chicago and ends in Boston next June, will examine key questions of principle. What is journalism? Who is a journalist? Can journalism really be neutral? What are the responsibilities imposed by the First Amendment? More than half a dozen major educational institutions have already agreed to sponsor them.

This is only a beginning. A web site will serve as a host for discussions about forum

topics, current news stories and other journalistic issues. We believe other projects will evolve.

The effort was convened by the Nieman Foundation and the Project for Excellence in Journalism in June 1997 in Boston. The Committee is an extraordinary group. Members come from various media, backgrounds, ages and institutions, from David Halberstam, the New York author, to Mark Trahan, a Navajo Indian newspaper editor from Idaho; from Lucy Himstedt Riley, a news director in Montgomery, Ala., to Vanessa Williams of the Washington Post and the President of the National Association of Black Journalists, to the heads of several journalism schools.

The group has no set agenda. It is not interested in placing owners at odds with reporters, journalism with business, print with TV or the internet. It is simply a united belief that journalism is a unique form of communication. It is a mission, a service. We must communicate what that means.

#### A STATEMENT OF CONCERN

This is a critical moment for journalism in America. While the craft in many respects has never been better—consider the supply of information or the skill of reporters—there is a paradox to our communications age. Revolutionary changes in technology, in our economic structure and in our relationship with the public, are pulling journalism from its traditional moorings.

As audiences fragment and our companies diversify, there is a growing debate within news organizations about our responsibilities as businesses and our responsibilities as journalists. Many journalists feel a sense of lost purpose. There is even doubt about the meaning of news, doubt evident when serious journalistic organizations drift toward opinion, infotainment and sensation out of balance with news.

Journalists share responsibility for the uncertainty. Our values and professional standards are often vaguely expressed and inconsistently honored. We have been slow to change habits in the presentation of news that may have lost their relevance. Change is necessary.

Yet as we change we assert some core principles of journalism are enduring. They are those that make journalism a public service central to self-government. They define our profession not as the act of communicating but as a set of responsibilities. Journalism can entertain, amuse and lift our spirits, but news organizations also must cover the matters vital to the well being of their increasingly diverse communities to foster the debate upon which democracy depends. The First Amendment implies obligation as well as freedom.

For much of our history, we believed we could let our work enunciate these principles and our owners and managers articulate these responsibilities. Today, too often, the principles in our work are hard to discern or lost in the din, and our leaders feel constrained.

Now we believe journalists must speak for themselves. We call on our colleagues to join as a community of professionals to clarify the purpose and principles that distinguish our profession from other forms of communication.

Since the change we face is fundamental, it requires a response of the same magnitude. We need a focused examination of the demands on journalism of the 21st Century.

We propose to summon journalists to a period of national reflection. First, we ask our colleagues young and old to sign this declaration of concern. We believe the consortium of journalists who share a commitment to common principles is so broad and so significant that it will constitute a powerful movement toward renewal.